

Case 2678

***Curculio viridicollis* Fabricius, 1792 (currently *Phyllobius viridicollis*; Insecta, Coleoptera): proposed conservation of the specific name, and *Rhyncolus* Germar, 1817: proposed designation of *Curculio ater* Linnaeus, 1758 as the type species**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the specific name of the leaf weevil *Phyllobius viridicollis* (Fabricius, 1792). The name is threatened by the hitherto misidentified senior subjective synonym *Curculio cloropus* Linnaeus, 1758. The originally designated type species of *Rhyncolus* Germar, 1817 was based on a previous misidentification of *C. cloropus* and it is proposed that *Curculio ater* Linnaeus, 1758 be formally designated, in accordance with Germar's intention and subsequent usage. Both *viridicollis* and *ater* occur commonly in central and northern Europe.

1. The name *Curculio cloropus* was established by Linnaeus (1758, p. 385) but has been misapplied by all subsequent authors. Its true identity as a senior synonym of *C. viridicollis* Fabricius, 1792 was recently established (Thompson & Alonso-Zarazaga, 1988, p. 84) by examining the syntypes in the collection of the Linnean Society of London. A female lectotype and male paralectotype were designated by Thompson & Alonso-Zarazaga (1988, p. 84).

2. The name *Curculio viridicollis* was proposed by Fabricius in 1792 (p. 469). The species has always been correctly interpreted and has no junior synonyms, subspecies or varieties. I have examined the two syntype specimens, kindly lent to me by Dr O. Martin from the University Zoological Museum, Copenhagen, and found they conform with the customary interpretation of the species. The species, now included in the genus *Phyllobius* Germar, 1824, is a leaf weevil which occurs commonly in central and northern Europe. The adult has been found on a wide variety of plants, both herbaceous and woody. It has been recorded as a pest of fruit trees (Dieckmann, 1980, p. 206) and of forest trees (Schindler, 1974, p. 269). Fifty references to this species are listed by Lona (1938, p. 453).

3. In 1817 Germar (p. 340) designated '*Hylesinus cloropus* Fab.' as the type species of his new genus *Rhyncolus*. Fabricius's misuse of the name *cloropus* began in his work of 1787 (p. 117) in which he misidentified Linnaeus's *cloropus* and synonymized it with *Curculio ater* Linnaeus, 1758, a wood-boring weevil. This action has caused doubt and confusion ever since. The names *ater* and *cloropus* occur on the same page (Linnaeus, 1758, p. 385); a survey of 100 works on European Coleoptera showed that just over half have used *ater* as the valid name, while the remainder have used *cloropus* (sometimes spelled *chloropus*) for the same species (see Thompson & Alonso-Zarazaga, 1988,

p. 84). Olivier (1790, p. 540) did not accept the synonymy and it has been recognized by many subsequent authors that *cloropus* of Fabricius is not the same species as *cloropus* Linnaeus, 1758, and that it, and not *cloropus* Linnaeus, is synonymous with *Curculio ater* Linnaeus, 1758. *C. ater* is the valid name for the type species of *Rhyncolus*; a female lectotype was designated by Thompson & Alonso-Zarazaga (1988, p. 85) from syntypes in the collection of the Linnean Society of London. This species has a similar range to *Phyllobius viridicollis* and is equally prominent in the literature (see Csiki, 1936, p. 179). Both species have occurred together, and will continue to do so, in any comprehensive work on northern or central European weevils.

4. Clearly, to apply the name *cloropus* Linnaeus, 1758 to the species now known as *Phyllobius viridicollis* would inevitably cause grave confusion. This can be avoided, and stability of nomenclature maintained, by suppressing the name *cloropus* Linnaeus, 1758.

5. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers:
 - (a) to suppress the specific name *cloropus* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Curculio cloropus*, for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
 - (b) to set aside all previous designations of type species for the nominal genus *Rhyncolus* Germar, 1817 and to designate *Curculio ater* Linnaeus, 1758 as the type species;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Rhyncolus* Germar, 1817 (gender: masculine), type species by designation in (1)(b) above *Curculio ater* Linnaeus, 1758;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *ater* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Curculio ater* (specific name of the type species of *Rhyncolus* Germar, 1817);
 - (b) *viridicollis* Fabricius, 1792, as published in the binomen *Curculio viridicollis*;
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *cloropus* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Curculio cloropus* and as suppressed in (1)(a) above.

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